

As part of our security agenda, we are promoting border security that halts illegal entry into the country. We are strengthening our national security by fighting terrorism in the Middle East where it begins, not on our own soil after an attack.

We are also promoting economic growth and job creation by lowering taxes and reducing regulation in order that families can plan for their very own secure future.

Energy security means America must harness our own domestic oil resources, expand oil refining capacity that is limited due to red tape, and at the same time carry out research and development for alternative energy sources while we focus on conservation's best practices.

We are fighting to defend the moral infrastructure that has made America great as part of our moral security agenda.

Mr. Speaker, we invite everyone to join us in a thoughtful process of securing America's future.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the Federal minimum wage has been stuck at \$5.15 for 9 years. A minimum-wage worker working full time earns about \$10,712 a year. A minimum-wage worker has to work an entire day in order to be able to afford to fill their tank with gas.

Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress have awarded themselves eight pay raises since the last time we increased the Federal minimum wage. That is about \$35,000 in pay raises.

Mr. Speaker, 35 percent of workers who receive a minimum wage are their families' sole earners. Sixty-one percent are women and one-third of those women are raising children.

Here is the deal, I say to my Republican colleagues: have a heart. And if you are not going to allow us to have a clean vote up or down on the minimum wage, then bring to the floor a bill that repeals your pay raise. It is not right for Members of Congress to get a pay raise while they force millions of Americans to continue to live in poverty.

VAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, as we head into August, it is worth noting our record so far this year in defense of traditional values.

Last month this body affirmed the role of fathers by passing a resolution to promote responsible fatherhood in America. Also in June, we got serious about enforcing broadcast decency standards by increasing fines for vio-

lating the law tenfold. Just this week the President signed the Freedom to Display the American Flag Act.

Last week we defended the Pledge of Allegiance from the whims of activist judges who seek to ban it from our schools. Although the Marriage Protection Amendment failed to get two-thirds support, it gained votes in both the House and Senate this year. Earlier this month we passed legislation to enforce laws prohibiting illegal online gambling. And last week we affirmed the dignity of human life by rejecting taxpayer funding of human embryo-destraining research.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a good first half of the year for millions of Americans who wish to see traditional American values defended on Capitol Hill. And I look forward to future successes when we reconvene after August.

WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 250, CARL D. PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2006

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 946 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 946

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (S. 250) to amend the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 to improve the Act. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHLMANN of New York). The gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

House Resolution 946 provides for the consideration of the conference report to accompany Senate 250, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 and waives all points of order against its consideration.

□ 1030

Mr. Speaker, I am actually proud to stand in support of this rule the underlying legislation, which reauthorizes important vocational education loans and programs. In our ever-changing economy, it is clear that education and training is more vital than ever before to both our Nation's economic growth and competitiveness, as well as the quality of life for individuals and their families.

This conference agreement will, among other things, direct the States to assess the effectiveness of State programs for career and technical education, with an emphasis on math and science, and also establishes performance indicators for those programs.

It will enhance coordination between secondary and post-secondary vocational programs and strengthen the role of the States in administering these programs, and this is a funding of a legislative priority.

This legislation allows for increased flexibility for States who choose the option to combine the Perkins State Grant with the Tech-Prep programs into one program, leading to greater program efficiencies. This once again is a State option.

It allows for the States to provide "incentive grants" to encourage and recognize exemplary performances in carrying out career and technical education programs.

It also will ensure the continued access to teachers for professional development certification.

Mr. Speaker, in 1917, the government first funded training for vocational programs relating to national defense. In 1963, we passed the first Vocational Education Act. It was modified in 1984 as the Carl Perkins Program, and again in 1990. So this program has been here in some way for 90 years in this Nation helping those vocational programs and training our citizens for their future.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, today this House is considering the conference report for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act. This is a good bill, a worthy bill. This bill addresses the needs of America's changing workforce and hopefully it will help close the gaps that threaten our long-term ability to compete in the global economy.

I want to express my appreciation and my respect for the leadership and hard work invested over the past 15 months by House Education and Workforce Committee Chairman BUCK McKEON and ranking member GEORGE MILLER in moving these vital issues forward and that resulted in this strong, bipartisan supported bill.

Mr. Speaker, the conference report successfully improves several aspects of the programs authorized under the Perkins Act. It provides for more effective accountability for these programs. It establishes stronger links to businesses and stronger partnerships between high schools, colleges and businesses, including small businesses. It